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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ABIDJAN 000691

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STATE PASS TO USTR C. HAMILTON  
USAID FOR C. GARRETT, S. SWIFT  
TREASURY FOR D. PETERS  
COMMERCE FOR RIVERO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/29/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL IV

SUBJECT: END OF JUNE ASSESSMENT OF OUAGA ACCORD  
IMPLEMENTATION - WHAT IS MOVING, WHAT IS NOT

REF: A. ABIDJAN 689

1B. ABIDJAN 633  
1C. ABIDJAN 615

Classified By: EconChief EMassinga, Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary. Implementation of the Ouaga Accord has not moved substantially since the Yamoussoukro CPC (reftel B). The Integrated Command Center is not functioning, the question of military ranks continues to bedevil efforts to begin integrating the militaries and the process of DDR, while the public ceremonies held to date to destroy arms are more show than substance. Redeployment of the civil administration is not moving, affecting the launch of the identification process, itself hobbled by continued failure to name a contractor to produce the voter cards and database. Funding remains a serious problem, with Ivorian leaders from all parties slowly coming to grips with the fact that new international assistance will be limited. Despite the failings of the past several weeks, however, the overall mood in the country remains positive. End Summary.

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Military Affairs - Integrated Command Center, Ranks  
Imbroglio, DDR, Militia Disarmament, ZoC Phaseout  
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12. (C) One of the biggest weaknesses of the transition process to date has been the Integrated Command Center. Designed to lead the way on military affairs by providing increasingly "Ivorianized" protection of the former Zone of Confidence through the expansion of "mixed" brigades (FANCI and Forces Nouvelles) and collaborating with ONUCI on securing DDR sites and disarmament, the ICC is functioning essentially in name only. While the FANCI's designated head of the ICC is in place at the Yamoussoukro facility, General Bakayoko of the FAFN refuses to name the deputy commander until the question of ranks (see para three) is solved. Until the question of ranks is settled, realistically the ICC will continue to exist in theory. The few mixed brigades that have been created so far are too few to be able to patrol the former ZoC, and thus ONUCI and LICORNE remain indispensable for providing security in those regions, particularly in the West.

13. (C) The question of ranks continues to gum the works of the overall peace process. Now in the hands of Ouaga facilitator Burkina Faso President B. Compaore, Both Defense Minister N'Guessan (FPI) and Minister of Tourism (and

effective number three in the Forces Nouvelles) Konate have confirmed to the Ambassador and other Emboffs that the number of officer-rank personnel involved subject to the dispute is minuscule: 15, according to N'Guessan in a conversation with the Ambassador held the week of June 18. The compromise brokered at the recent CPC conclave at Yamoussoukro (refel B) allowed officers to rise to the highest rank attained by any of their peers who entered service at the same time. This clever solution, however, has not sat well with much of the FANCI officer corps, although the reasons, as well as the identity and political importance of the officers who are the subject of the dispute, remain unclear. The 15 FAFN officers are apparently not the so-called ComZones, who will be allowed to quietly retire with their ranks intact, along with benefiting from a side agreement understood to allow them to keep whatever goods and property they have "acquired" during their tenures.

¶4. (C) Real DDR and militia disarmament continue to be delayed. Instead, the country continues to be treated to what is effectively political theater for the masses in the form of very public arms destruction ceremonies. The next one is scheduled for the Forces Nouvelles stronghold Bouake on July 5 (postponed from June 30), where a "Flame of Peace" is supposed to destroy the first tranche of weapons from the former rebels. What is troubling is how this ceremony, as with the last ceremony "disarming" militias in Guiglo (reftel C), remains outside of regularized DDR channels. The disarmed soldiers here will not be channeled into a proper integration and reinsertion program to be established under the well-understood guidelines governing DDR. While the President and Prime Minister are scheduled to attend the July 5 event, the results cannot be expected to go beyond symbolism. As for the real DDR process, as specified in the Ouaga Accord, that won't start until 1) the question of ranks

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is solved, and 2) funds are made available, most likely through the World Bank's post-conflict facility (Reftel A).

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Redeployment of Administration  
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¶5. (C) After the June 5 decree announcing the nomination of prefects to the former rebel zones, along with a companion decree assigning magistrates to the North, actual deployment of state officials remains slow. The ONUCI Political Affairs Director in Bouake told Emboff that the recent public ceremony installing the prefect there was "just for show;" the prefect returned to Abidjan within days and has not returned. Other prefects in the North have not taken up their posts, nor have magistrates. Contacts in the Prime Minister's office inform us that a decree naming sub-prefects will be issued "shortly," theoretically facilitating the overall deployment of the essential organs of state control throughout the country. The delay, however, is serious; the audiences foraines process cannot begin without the prefects, sub-prefects and magistrates being in place.

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Identification  
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¶6. (C) The Prime Minister and President, along with Ouaga Accord facilitator Compaore, all said that as of mid-June the audiences foraines would relaunch by "the end of June." This clearly is not going to happen. While we do believe all sides have the political will to begin the identification process (particularly the PM), whether the process can start in July is an open question. Perhaps we will see pilot programs put into operation first, allowing the machinery to be put in place and gather momentum.

¶7. (C) One essential prerequisite is the choice of the "technical operator," the contractor selected to produce the

voter identification cards. Sources in the Prime Minister's office and the Presidency indicate that French company Sagem remains the top choice, despite some initial grumbling over the excessive (more than USD 100 million) price tag. Sources in the PM's office indicate negotiations with Sagem to reduce its asking price are ongoing.

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Funding  
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¶ 8. (C) Funding for the whole post-conflict package (DDR, identification, the ill-defined "civil service" program designed to absorb former combatants who are not integrated into the new blended armed forces) and some urgent rebuilding of crumbling basic infrastructure remains another open question. The recently published budget has a massive funding gap of USD 589 million that it expects WB, IMF and new bilateral assistance to cover. The government, through both the PM and various ministries, regularly put out appeals to the international community to contribute additional funding streams for various programs addressing different post-conflict needs. A PM-organized donor roundtable (bilateral plus the IFIs) was scheduled for June 27th, but has been postponed until July 2, ostensibly due to the Quadafi visit. Most donor countries, including the EU, indicate, both in private and in the near-constant round of Abidjan donors meetings, reluctance to devote new resources in Cote d'Ivoire.

¶ 9. (C) Most donors appear more willing to address the post-conflict funding gap through multilateral means, i.e., through the IFIs. The recently concluded accord reached between WB and IMF staff and Cote d'Ivoire sets the stage for the IFIs boards to begin this process (reftel A). However, the ramping-up of IFI funding will take until mid-2008 and into 2009, leaving it unclear how the government will address some of the big ticket items, such as the civil service program, among the most obvious on the list.

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Mood - Calmer, Less Tense  
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¶ 10. (C) While a number of crucial elements of the Ouaga  
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Accord remain undone, the improvement in the mood and ambiance in the country is undeniable. The climate in Abidjan is more relaxed. Major supermarkets are reopening in former rebel-held territory, and Western Union is setting up shop in Northern zones that haven't seen financial institutions in four years. The Ouaga Accord has unmistakably contributed to a palpable improvement in the overall situation.

¶ 11. (C) Comment. Our previous overall grade of B-/C for the implementation of the Ouaga Accord (reftel C) must slip to a C/C because of the weak progress seen since the last assessment. It is time for the Ivorian political class to get to work. End Comment.

HOOKS